

THE COST OF THE EXHIBITION BUILDING.

THE original contract for the building provided that a sum of 79,800*l.* should be paid for the use of it towards the purposes of the Exhibition, and in the event of its purchase the price was fixed at 150,000*l.*; but it also had attached to it a schedule of prices, according to which all additional work not included in the specification was to be executed. The additional work found to be required in the progress of the undertaking raised the contemplated expenditure of 79,800*l.* for the hire of the building to 109,000*l.*, and that amount has been nearly paid under the strict terms of the contract. It appears, however, that this would not secure the contractors from loss, and the Royal Commissioners have been led to pass the following resolution, which carries with it the comments it naturally induces:—

"It was resolved, that although, under ordinary circumstances, the payment of a higher sum than that agreed upon for work executed under a contract, after public tender, is highly objectionable, and would establish a very dangerous precedent, and although the Commission could admit no claim on the part of the contractors, yet that they were of opinion that, under the circumstances recapitulated in the report of Lord Granville and Sir William Cubitt, Messrs. Fox, Henderson, and Co. should be secured against ultimate positive loss, and that the sum of 35,000*l.*, as recommended in the above report, should be forthwith advanced to them, upon their written agreement to abide by such terms and conditions as the Commission may hereafter prescribe.

"It was also agreed that the further questions raised in that report, as to the final verification and settlement of the accounts, and as to the conditions to be imposed in case of the materials being sold for a higher sum than that estimated, should be referred to the Finance Committee."

There seems to poor mortals who, like us, deal in small figures, rather a wide step between "no claim" and five-and-thirty thousand pounds. As it now stands Messrs. Fox and Henderson are to receive for the use of the building 144,000*l.*

Some friends of Messrs. Munday, deducing from this unexpected liberality to Messrs. Fox and Co. proofs of the profits they have lost by giving up the contract they at one time held, are striving to obtain for them a larger sum as compensation than that awarded by Mr. Stephenson, 5,120*l.*

The Executive Committee have announced that the possession of the building will be given up to the contractors on the 1st of December.

FOREIGN ARCHITECTURAL AND ARTISTICAL INTELLIGENCE.

Berlin. — The Philanthropic Architectural Association (*Gemeinnützige Baugesellschaft*) of the Prussian capital held its anniversary on the 27th ult. The chairman (Prince of Prussia) said, that the undertaking had been prosperous last year, inviting the further co-operation of the public thereto. *Landbaumeister* Hoffmann stated then at great length, that the Philanthropic Architectural Society had hitherto erected 15 dwellings, with 145 abodes, and 20 workshops. Amongst the dwellers are 56 masters of trades (1), 27 journeymen, &c. This scale ascends even to some minor employes of government, especially of the postal department, &c. When, on the 14th Oct. 1849, the society opened its first houses, the number of lodgers was only 70; now it amounts to 850, amongst whom there are 400 children. The speaker still lamented the small degree of assistance afforded to the society by the public at large, and didactically alluded to the example of England. The house now in course of erection in the Ritterstrasse alone will cost 12,000 thalers. The income of this year amounted to 27,000 thalers; the outlay to 21,000 thalers. It was considered very desirable that the waste ground owned by the society should be soon built over, for which 20,000 thalers more were required.—One of the lodgers alluded to the paucity of dwellings

under 50 thalers (7*l.* 10*s.*) a year. The Prince presented the society with a description of the model lodging houses of the London Exhibition.—*New Houses of Parliament.*—The provisional building of the first chamber in the Leipzig street progresses satisfactorily. But it is projected to erect next year a joint building for both houses of the Prussian legislature, for which huge structure an appropriate locality is sought.—The head government have demanded the opinion of all provincial governments, and of the Society for the Improvement of the Working Classes, on the occupation of children in factories, mines, &c.; according to which young people under sixteen years of age are restricted in working for certain branches of trade, as well as entirely prohibited some occupations encroaching on the health of the young. A stringent supervision of such works, as well as the railways, in a sanitary and educational (moral) point of view, is also in contemplation.

Austrian Art Affairs.—Court-Councillor Count Thun, brother to the Minister of Public Instruction, is now engaged on a draft of a new organization of the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts—an establishment whose utter situation seems now to attract attention. The Bohemian States, also, had decided on ornamenting the interior of that original old building, known as the Tycho-Brah Astronomical Observatory, at Prague, with frescoes taken from the Czechian history. To this undertaking Director Ruben, the painter of Columbus, was chosen, who devoted considerable time in the composition of the cartoons. But when they were completed, the supreme sanction for their execution was refused. Mr. Ruben, who is one of the celebrities who had accepted the situation in Austria, in hope of times favourable to art and science, has received this news with a feeling of great disappointment.

ENCROACHMENTS IN THE NEW ROAD, ST. PANCRAS.

YOUR attention has been called, and very judiciously, to the encroachments now in progress in the New-road, notwithstanding the existence of an Act of Parliament for their prevention. Some years ago attempts were made by parties owning property in the locality to introduce buildings as now carrying on; but the St. Pancras Vestry of that day, consisting of the principal inhabitants of the parish, interfered and prevented it,—looking to the true interests of the parish and the public. Recourse was then had to the introduction of wooden buildings upon wheels, which, being removable, were intended to evade the provisions of the Act of Parliament, to which your correspondent refers. These moveable machines or wooden houses, were suffered to remain unmoved, and gradually to sink into the ground, whereby the parties expected, in course of time, to establish a foundation, which could not be considered to come within the prohibition of the Act of Parliament, as not resting on an old foundation. This device, however, was rendered abortive, and no buildings were permitted to be erected upon these imaginary foundations. In course of time a new state of things occurred in the parish: the old and respectable body of vestrymen were expelled from office, by the operation of what is called "Hobhouse's Act," and the ultra party obtained the ascendancy. Like the disciples of that school, the first thing they did, in carrying out their false economy, was to let the old toll-house (which had been surrendered to the parish with the roads), for a tobacco-shop, producing some paltry 20*l.* or 30*l.* per annum in aid of the poor-rate. This building was certainly on an old foundation. The example thus set, the parties who had previously been prohibited from carrying on their erections immediately followed, which was encouraged by the vestry, they thinking, no doubt, that they had accomplished a great object in this pitiful increase of the poor-rate, by the addition of the assessments from these buildings. Thus matters have crept on, and all in the teeth of the Act of Parliament declaring such buildings nuisances, and re-

moveable as such accordingly. It is to be hoped that you will persevere in directing public attention to these nuisances, until the continuance of them is not only prevented, but those existing are extinguished, and this important thoroughfare to the three great railway stations—the Great Western Railway, the North-Western Railway, and the Great Northern Railway—is restored to its original position.

AN OLD PARISHIONER.

POWERS OF PAYING BOARDS.

CLARENWELL COUNTY COURT.

(Before Mr. Serj. Jones.)

Prew v. Helms.—This was an action to recover damages for a trespass committed by the defendant, who is surveyor to the Board of Commissioners of Paving for the parish of St. Andrew, Holborn.

Mr. Parry, who appeared as counsel for the plaintiff, said his client had no vindictive feelings in bringing this matter before the Court, and merely sought to recover nominal damages.—the plaintiff's object being rather to obtain his Honour's opinion upon a point of law than to recover compensation, and (should his Honour's opinion be favourable) to prevent a recurrence of what he (Mr. Parry) conceived to be a most unwarrantable act on the part of the defendant. The circumstances which brought the parties into conflict were to be regretted, more particularly as the defendant had been urged to the commission of the act by another party—(a Mr. Babb)—a next-door neighbour of the plaintiff. Mr. Prew (the plaintiff) had for many years carried on business as a tailor in High Holborn, and it so happened that his neighbour (Babb) was fond of litigation, and possessed not that feeling which, in the common acceptance of the term, was called "neighbourly." This was not the only occasion on which neighbour Prew had had to complain of neighbour Babb's annoyance.—neighbour Babb having summoned him before a magistrate and obtained a conviction for what was considered an offence against the statute; albeit the offence complained of was purely the result of accident; the legs of a pair of trousers, which amongst other articles adorned Mr. Prew's emporium, having, whilst struggling with a brisk breeze, rather exceeded the strict line of decorum and flapped against neighbour Babb's window. Now to prevent a repetition of such an unforeseen intrusion, Mr. Prew erected a board in front of his premises. No sooner, however, was the board fixed, than away bounded Babb to the Board of Commissioners, and these gentlemen, who, no doubt, sat in "meditation deep," thought with the irascible Mr. Babb, that their Local Act had been violated,—that their rights and privileges had been illegally trampled upon. They accordingly directed their surveyor to remove forthwith the object of Mr. Babb's disquietude, and on the 15th of July, shortly after sunrise, the worthy surveyor made a formidable attack upon Mr. Prew's board, which, with the able assistance of a street orderly, he triumphantly carried away (laughter). These facts would be clearly proved; so that the point for his Honour's consideration would resolve itself entirely into a question of law. It was not a question whether one Board had power to remove the other.

Mr. Paine.—That is the *knotty point*.

Mr. Parry.—Not at all: the question entirely turns upon the dry construction of section 56, of 57 Geo. 3, c. 29 (the Metropolitan Paving Act), in pursuance of which the defendant before removing the board was bound to lay an information before a magistrate; and I submit that the board having been removed by the defendant before he obtained the judgment of the magistrate, the defendant violated the Act of Parliament, and was guilty of a trespass.

Mr. Paine said he would admit the facts as stated by his learned friend, and would leave the question to the consideration of the Court, although he had considerable doubt as to whether the section relied upon was not capable of a very different interpretation to that which his friend assumed was in favour of the plaintiff.

His Honour, after taking time to look into the Act of Parliament, was clearly of opinion that a trespass had been committed; but as the plaintiff did not seek to recover heavy compensation, he should assess the damages at 40*s.* and costs.

Calcareous Brick.—Signor Longo, a builder at Aosta, according to the *Piedmontese Gazette*, has discovered a limestone quarry, at Cesalet, near Aosta, which yields hydraulic lime of the common quality, in the near proximity of a sort of earth, which, mixed with the lime, forms with it a compound which will harden under water within fourteen hours, and become as hard as good brick at the end of three days.